

VZCZCXRO1482
PP RUEHFK RUEHKSO RUEHNAG RUEHNH
DE RUEHKO #3340 3440148
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 090148Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9286
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUYNAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY
RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/USFJ PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 1320
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 3679
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 9311
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 1889
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 5111
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - NORTH KOREA

¶1. LEAD STORIES: Most papers gave top play to a set of recommendations by a government panel on decentralization.

¶2. "How to Carry Six-Party Efforts over into Obama Administration" The liberal Asahi editorialized (12/9): "...The ongoing six-party head-of-delegation meeting has unprecedented significance, as the U.S. will have a Democratic administration starting next month. This will be the last round of the six-party talks under the Bush administration. The six-party talks are the only international framework aimed at getting North Korea to abandon its nuclear programs. The incoming Obama administration intends to maintain the framework. The issue is clear: We should implement what we can do now in order to continue the talks. The ongoing meeting is increasingly important, as it will take some time for the new administration to begin substantive work after the selection of key government officials."

¶3. "U.S. Should Not Seek Hasty Results" The liberal Mainichi stated in an editorial (12/9): "...Although we hope progress will be made at the ongoing six-party head-of-delegation meeting, we are concerned about how the talks will go. We are worried that the Bush administration, which will leave office on January 20, could fall into a North Korean trap due to its obsession with achieving some results on the matter.... It is obvious that North Korea is taking advantage of the fact that the Bush administration is already a lame duck. The U.S. should not make any concessions that would impede future negotiations in an attempt to produce hasty results. It would be wiser for the U.S. to have the incoming Obama administration begin fresh talks rather than striking a deal with serious flaws."

